



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.  
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986

# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Douglas L. Davis

**Phone:** (304) 558-8986

### **Atty. Gen. McGraw Marks Start of EnergyStar Sales Tax Holiday**

CHARLESTON – At a press conference at the State Capitol this morning, West Virginia Attorney General Darrell McGraw and Governor Joe Manchin joined to announce the start of an EnergyStar Sales Tax Holiday to run from September 1 through November 30, 2010.

During the holiday period, consumers will not pay the state's 6% sales tax when purchasing qualified EnergyStar appliances and products costing \$5,000 or less from West Virginia stores and vendors.

"I am happy that the work of my office can provide this tax relief program as well as contribute to energy conservation," Attorney General McGraw said. "Not only will participants save up to \$300 in taxes, but they'll also save up to 40% on energy bills and help protect the environment at the same time."

Now in its third and final year, the EnergyStar Tax Holiday is the result of one of many actions taken by the Attorney General's Office on behalf of the state's consumers. In 2003, the office filed suit against Visa and MasterCard for charging debit card fees that violated state consumer protection and antitrust laws.

"We found that these illegal fees had increased the price of nearly every retail product sold in the state, costing consumers with every purchase," McGraw said.

In 2008, when the Attorney General reached a settlement with Visa and MasterCard for \$12.1 million, he concluded that the money should be returned to West Virginia's consumers. His office conceived a sales tax relief program and, with legislation sponsored by Governor Manchin, established a tax holiday for EnergyStar-qualified products.

"This EnergyStar Sales Tax Holiday program illustrates just one of the ways our Consumer Protection Division helps our citizens," McGraw continued. "In this case, we shielded our state's economy from credit card companies' unfair business practices and were able to provide consumers with the benefits of a tax holiday."

EnergyStar is a joint program of the EPA and US Department of Energy to promote energy efficiency. Products carrying the EnergyStar seal use 20 to 40 percent less energy than comparable products and reduce harmful greenhouse emissions.

"I'm proud that my office can be part of moving West Virginia forward to cleaner and more efficient energy use," McGraw said.

Purchases in West Virginia qualify for the EnergyStar Sales Tax Holiday if the product purchased has earned the EnergyStar seal, costs \$5,000 or less, and is for noncommercial home or personal use. Residents can take advantage of the sales tax holiday in addition to the West Virginia Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program administered by the state's Department of Environmental Protection. Learn more about the tax holiday at <http://www.wvtax.gov>.

West Virginia consumers can file complaints or alert the Attorney General's Office to unfair or deceptive practices by calling the Consumer Protection Hot Line, 1-800-368-8808, or by obtaining a complaint form from the consumer web page at [www.wvago.gov](http://www.wvago.gov). For regular consumer news updates, follow the AGO on Facebook and Twitter.

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